



Golden Gate National Recreation Area

File Code:

L3215 (GOGA-PLAN)

Big Lagoon Working Group Meeting

Meeting #4 Notes

March 6, 2003

The purpose of the meeting was to convene a Working Group that provides a venue for interested parties to exchange information, clarify issues and concerns, and collaborate on creative problem solving with the National Park Service (NPS) project team on the Big Lagoon Restoration.

Meeting Agenda

1. Start Up
2. Follow Up Items
3. Announcements
4. Planning Process and Schedule
5. Information Exchange: Water Diversions, Visitor Use and Parking, Archaeology and Cultural Resources
6. Closing Comments and Follow Up
7. Meeting Evaluation

1. Start Up

The meeting was opened by facilitator Peg Henderson (NPS-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program), who reviewed the meeting agenda and led the group in reviewing the following guidelines, which were drafted by the group at their first meeting. The group added an additional item:

- Support participation by all
- Ask for clarification when needed
- Begin and end on time
- Raise hand to speak and call on people in order
- Don't interrupt
- Finish topics and define points within a reasonable amount of time
- One conversation at a time
- Speak clearly and loudly (new item added)

Self introductions: Everyone in the room identified himself or herself and identified their group affiliation, if any.

2. Follow Up

- At the last meeting, one participant stated that the State Park had placed riprap on the banks of Redwood Creek upstream of Muir Woods and requested additional information. The participant felt that this issue was directly related to Big Lagoon since rip-rap can increase local scour and sedimentation downstream.
- Chazz Pothast (State Parks) responded that there hasn't been any in-stream work or rip-rap in Mt. Tamalpais State Park. In addition, the park is seeking funding for efforts to reduce erosion and sedimentation in the park. The park welcomes comments; they can be emailed to chazz@mcn.org

3. Announcements

- The Tomales Bay Watershed Council, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Marin County, and UC Davis Extension are hosting a Pathogen Workshop to introduce the public to the process for setting pathogen TMDLs (Total Maximum Daily Loads). The workshop will be March 10 5:00–8:00 at the Dance Palace in Pt. Reyes Station. The draft Tomales Bay Watershed Plan will be released this month. The plan will be available on the web soon at www.tomalesbaywatershed.org (Michael Mery).
- A ranger-led hike in upper watershed of Redwood Creek is scheduled for Sunday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There will also be a Full Moon Program at Muir Woods, March 18, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. (Mia Monroe)
- The Fisheries Restoration Grant Program requests for proposals will be out next week. For more information see www.dfg.ca.gov. Proposals will be due in early May. (Gayle Seymour, California Department of Fish and Game).

4. Planning Process and Schedule

Project co-managers Carolyn Shoulders and Jennifer Vick presented updates on project actions, meetings and studies. Since the last BLWG meeting, updates are as follows:

- The NPS conducted a site visits with regulatory agencies and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.
- USGS researchers continue to survey for California red-legged frogs. They have found a second egg mass on the project site and have radio-tagged several adult frogs.
- The updated topographic map of the site is nearly complete and is due in two weeks.
- The NPS has begun wetland delineation for the Corps of Engineers permit. Also, NPS is revisiting the Cowardin delineation at lower Green Gulch and may revise the Cowardin wetland map for that portion of the site.
- The NPS is beginning water quality testing to determine if pollutants occur on-site. At this stage, the testing will not necessarily identify the source of pollutants. Testing will continue throughout the summer. Parameters being evaluated include coliform, nitrates, phosphorus, pH, MBAS, and conductivity.
- The NPS is currently finalizing a contract with the project design team, which will be headed by Phil Williams and Associates, with Stillwater Sciences, John Roberts and Associates, and Tom Gardali(of PRBO).
- The sediment budget consultants have begun field surveys and analysis. Initial surveys suggest that the main source of –human- sediment to the creek is channel incision in the Frank Valley area between Muir Woods and Big Lagoon.

- The project schedule has been updated based on coordination with the design contractor. The revised meeting schedule was distributed at the meeting and is attached. The schedule will also be posted on the website. At the next meeting the Working Group will begin discussing project objectives and screening criteria. At the May 8, meeting the group will help define the restoration alternatives.

Comments:

- (Regarding the red-legged tree frog --) Is it time to close the aluminum gate between the fields and Redwood Creek? *Yes, the NPS will close the gate soon.*
- Who on the design team knows dunes? *Stillwater Sciences staff has expertise in dune vegetation. The NPS may also bring in additional in-house staff that worked on the Presidio/Lobos Dunes and Crissy Field restoration, as well as Mia Monroe who has worked on dune restoration at Muir Beach.*
- Can project screening criteria be posted ahead of the meeting so the group can be prepared? *NPS project staff will try to post the screening criteria before the next meeting, but due to delays in maintaining the web site may not be able to meet that request.*
- At the April meeting, what will be the decision making process that we use? *The project team will bring draft criteria and work with the group to weigh the trade-offs between criteria.*
- Do we have meeting dates beyond May? *Meetings will continue to be the first Thursday of each month. There will be no meeting in July.*

5. Information Exchange

Water Diversions

Jennifer Vick presented maps of active and inactive water rights and diversions in the Redwood Creek watershed. Copies of the PowerPoint slides were distributed at the meeting. This information is provided to inform the group about water diversions on the creek and as background for developing and evaluating design alternatives.

Comments:

- Will the owners of water rights be approached to relinquish? *This depends on the outcome of analyses being conducted by the design team. There is a potential for negotiation in the future, but it is too early to tell at this point.*

Visitor Experience

Mia Monroe, Muir Woods Site Supervisor gave an overview of the current visitor uses at the site and described conditions that affect visitor experience in the Big Lagoon area. Approximately 440,000 people visit the site each year. Activities at the site include hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, picnicking, beach-going, and wildlife viewing. Facilities and services at the site include trails (multi-use), picnic area, restrooms, parking/gate, interpretive kiosk, phone, emergency services, and interpretive programs. One major issue at the site is lack of connectivity between trails. For example, trail users reaching the site from the Coastal Trail on the south must travel a long distance on Highway One to pick up the Coastal Trail to the north of the site. Another major issue in the planning process is deciding what visitor experience at the site should be and how to support that experience without harming natural and cultural resource values.

Comments:

- Where does the Coastal Trail impact the watershed? *The Coastal Trail is in the watershed both north and south of the project site.*

Transportation Planning

Paul Bignardi, transportation planner with GGNRA, summarized the ongoing Comprehensive Transportation Management Plan (CTMP), highlighting some of the issues relevant to the Big Lagoon area. Copies of his slide presentation were distributed at the meeting.

Comments:

- The CTMP needs to consider the potential increase in impacts if visitor access is more efficient. That is, increasing the number of people at the site may increase impacts to natural resources. The analysis could take the form of a "risk assessment." Can we build into this process a way of saying "no" to visitors. That is, controlling or reducing the number of people visiting the site? Also, the CTMP should reduce traffic congestion. Some people may not see improvements as enhancements because they will have to plan visits to the park sites ahead of time. *Visitor crowding is being factored into the analysis. A reservation system should be considered to control or reduce visitation.*
- Is progress being made on a shuttle from Manzanita Interchange? *Yes. The CTMP is looking at three transportation intercept alternatives: 1) Rodeo Drive, 2) Marin City, and 3) the Manzanita Interchange. Shuttles would be operated from the intercept facility to park location(s) in west Marin.*
- Bike trails are disconnected. There's a concern that if they become too efficient use will increase which will cause an increase in erosion, especially in winter. Need to focus on increased use, an important issue.
- Is the Pacific Way bridge being addressed in the CTMP? *Pacific Way and the bridge will be addressed by the Big Lagoon design consultants.*
- CTMP parking data were collected before the State Park changed their parking fee structure.

- The group will continue the discussion about transportation and parking issues at the meeting on May 1, 2003. Meanwhile, questions and comments can be sent to Paul_Bignardi@nps.gov.

Archaeology and Cultural Resources

Leo Barker, archaeologist with Golden Gate National Recreation Area, presented an overview of cultural resource investigations at the project site. The goal is to identify all cultural resources at the site that need protection under several authorities, including the :

- National Historic Preservation Act;
- Archaeological Resource Protection Act; and
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act;

The first challenge is to find the sites. Less than 2% of GGNRA has been surveyed. At the project site, human ecology spans the same period of time as the lagoon. Only recent sites are visible on the surface. At GGNRA, we are giving consideration to older, subsurface sites by using geoarchaeological methods to discern what is below the surface. For surveys being conducted for the project, the NPS is taking a total of 24 cores at the site; 19 have been completed at this time. Remaining work will be completed this summer. The cores will be analyzed by Jack Meyer (Sonoma State University) in March and April.

One archaeological site has been recorded at Big Lagoon. Information on this site, however, is very poor. While collecting soil cores, the NPS identified two additional archaeological sites within the project boundary. The geoarchaeological investigation may identify additional sites as well. Also, the known sites must be better characterized as part of the project evaluations.

In addition to archaeological sites, the National Park Service must consider sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (over 50 years old and of national significance) and cultural heritage values. The NPS is working with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to identify and protect cultural values at the site and investigate ways of incorporating cultural values into the project design.

Paul Scolari, historian at GGNRA, discussed other considerations for cultural resources at the site.

- 1) We are trying to identify sites to inform the design process, need to be mindful.
- 2) Cultural resources include buildings, landscapes, etc. In this project the focus is archaeology.
- 3) The Crissy Field Restoration Project was somewhat similar. Big Lagoon includes ecological restoration and archaeology.

Comments:

- Does the law always require you to preserve a site as is? *The sites will be preserved. In addition, cultural values could be reflected in the project through other means, such as including culturally significant plants in the planting palette. The NPS will work with the tribe to identify appropriate measures.*

Frank Ross, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, explained that the Miwok still exist, though many people think they were exterminated. The tribe is working with the Golden Gate NRA staff to make sure that the process of restoration doesn't erode or destroy archaeological sites. One house in Muir Beach already sits on top of a midden. The tribe wants to protect the remaining middens at the site. The tribe hopes that through this process we can develop a vision of stewardship for the site. The tribe would also like to find a way to restore habitat at the site while maintaining transportation.

Comments:

- The Crissy Field marsh is too small to function because they expanded the historic airfield. Saying Big Lagoon is "like Crissy Field" sets off alarms. We want a fully functioning lagoon, not one like Crissy Field. *What we learned from Crissy Field is to do archaeological work before design.*
- If you discover that the area served an important Native American function, would you go back and recreate the setting for that function? *Frank Ross: Uses are not just historic but also current. The tribe still does basketry and other traditional practices. There are currently not a lot of opportunities to communicate to visitors that areas were used traditionally by native peoples. One element missing from Golden Gate NRA sites is the recognition of Native people's habitation.*
- If records support a historical function would you recreate or revitalize that function? *Could be like the activities that occurred there once, such as basketry, could be incorporated into the project design.*
- Is the goal always preservation of the site in its existing state, or restoration of the historic use of the site? *A site would be saved in an unimpaired condition.*

6. Closing Comments and Follow Up

There were no additional comments.

7. Meeting Evaluation

Liked: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great presentations • Liked the anthropologic/cultural values view • Liked the traffic piece • Appreciated having the representative from the Coast Miwok here, hope you can continue coming • Good facilitation 	Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have name placards • More tables • Too much packed into one meeting • Put the handouts on one table so we can see what is there and select what we want
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NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, April 3, 2003, 7:00-9:00 p.m., San Francisco Bay Model, 2100 Bridgeway, Sausalito

Meeting Attendees

Thirty seven people attended the meeting. Attendees included those representing themselves as individuals and those representing groups or agencies. In addition to those representing themselves, the following groups and agencies were represented among the attendees:

Almonte Neighborhood Outdoor Art Club
California Department of Fish and Game
California Department of Transportation
California State Parks
California Native Plant Society
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
Golden Gate Parks Conservancy
Green Gulch Farm
Marin Conservation League
Muir Beach Community Services District
Muir Woods Park Community Association
National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Oceanriders
Point Reyes Bird Observatory
San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
Sierra Club
Tamalpais Conservation Club
Tomales Bay Watershed Council
Wilderness Way